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NUTRITION

WAR FOOD ADMINISTRATION

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SEPTEMBER - WARTIME NUTRITION MONTH

All spotlights are now turned to focus Nation-wide attention on good nutrition. Specialists in radio and press, in promotion techniques, and campaign methods have applied their special skills and talents to preparing "copy" and "props" for September's feature - nutrition. This intensive and extensive promotion sponsored by national advertisers and food merchandisers in cooperation with Government will augment the efforts of those whose full-time, year-round job is nutrition education.

Interest in nutrition, then, should reach and all-time high in September. To make this interest function - to stimulate every person to put into practice the idea of eating wisely and to turn that practice into a lasting habit - is the job that will continue beyond September. As members of nutrition committees you will want to capitalize on the widespread enthusiasm that is aroused during Wartime Nutrition Month. Ideally, the high peak of interest reached in September should level off only slightly to a high plateau of action - better food habits for more people.

EXCERPTS FROM AHEA PAPERS APROPOS

In line with the aims of the September promotion and the long-time program of nutrition education are the following excerpts from two talks presented at the annual meeting of the American Home Economics Association in Chicago in June.

Lydia J. Roberts: "To realize fully our hopes for a healthy citizenry, people must know what good nutrition is and what it means to them in terms of personal health and vigor, so that they will voluntarily eat regularly foods that will meet their needs. This can be accomplished only through an effective education program among all ages and classes of people.

"You home economists here today could alone have a marked influence on

national nutrition if you would go home and do in your communities the few specific things which I have suggested in this talk, namely:

"1. Write to the Food and Nutrition Board of the National Research Council, Washington, D. C., for copies of the bulletin, 'Nutritional Inadequacies and Nutritional Status,' and for a bulletin in preparation on the enrichment program.

"2. Start work in your nutrition committee and other interested groups to secure this year legislation for enriched bread and flour in your State.

"3. If you are from a rice-consuming State, get busy with others interested in better nutrition, on methods of improving this staple food.

"4. If you come from a corn-meal State, find out what is being done on this problem, and do your part in the missionary work needed to secure fortification with niacin, or to effect improvement in some other way.

"5. Stimulate your nutrition committee and other groups to take an active part in the school lunch program, and thus insure its success.

"(a) Visit the lunchroom and see what is being done and what the needs are.

"(b) Help educate the teachers as to the purpose of the lunch and how to utilize its opportunities for nutrition improvement.

"(c) Help to see that good lunches are being served, and that children are eating them.

"6. Encourage teachers to improve the nutrition of school children, and do everything you can to help in this program.

"If we will all do even these few things, then we can rest assured that the prospects are indeed good for some of our hopes being realized."

E. Neige Todhunter: "If families are to receive the full benefits of research in foods and nutrition, and gain what we know can be obtained through putting the recent findings into practice, then

we must see that this information reaches them. An educational program at every age level from the cradle, through every grade, in college, and among adult groups is essential. Nutrition, food selection and preparation must be part of the education of every child in school, of every student in high school and college, both for boys and for girls. All adult groups, both rural and urban, must be reached. Home Economists have a big part in such a program.

"But nutrition in all its many phases and interrelationships cannot be understood, interpreted, and put into practice without the teamwork of the biochemists, clinicians, statisticians, research workers, public health officers, physicians, dentists, nutritionists, dietitians, and home economists. All these must work together to solve problems and to carry the results of the newer findings to the family. Also we realize today that there is another group who have a major contribution to make to the achievement of better health through better food; this group includes the farmer and producer of food, the agriculturists, the food processors and distributors, and the economists."

These two talks in full, and other papers of interest to nutrition committees will appear in the September and November numbers of the Journal of Home Economics.

NUTRITION ITEMS

In an interesting review of studies on self-selection of diets in the July issue of Nutrition Reviews the conclusions reached are:

1. Appetites are often fickle and unpredictable.
2. Appetites may be trivial in origin.
3. Nutrition based on appetites is not universally successful.
4. Individual animals vary in their ability to make choices that will improve nutritional status.
5. Factors affecting human appetites may be expected to be more numerous and complex than those affecting the appetites of animals.
6. From the evidence, self-selection of diets appears to be inferior to scientific evaluation of diets for maintenance of good nutrition.

These conclusions are in line with long-held beliefs and teachings in nutrition.

Elvehjem and coworkers at the University of Wisconsin have recently reported

on the thiamine, riboflavin, and niacin content of variety meats after broiling, braising, and boiling. In the case of boiling, vitamin retention in the meat was dependent on cooking time. Greater amounts of all the vitamins were retained in meat after broiling than after braising. In nearly every case over 90 percent of the niacin and riboflavin was recovered in the meat and drippings.

The importance of a good diet during pregnancy, recently emphasized by the findings of J. H. Ebbs and his group at Toronto and B. S. Burke and her coworkers at Harvard, has been brought into clear focus again by J. Warkany's work at Cincinnati with his interesting leads regarding the effect of the mother's diet upon malformation in the offspring. Such deformities as cleft palate, poorly formed jaws and spines, and missing toes are induced in experimental animals by poor diets; and, more important, they are prevented in large degree by good diets. There is genuine interest in the possibility that these findings will explain some of the deformities in human offspring.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD

WEST VIRGINIA—The Hampshire County Nutrition Committee is cooperating with the County Red Cross Chapter by enlisting the help of various local agencies in preparing and serving specified food to blood donors on the day the Blood Bank is held.

The Grant County Nutrition Committee held "Open House" on the day the new canning center opened. A feature of the day was a continuous showing of the movie, "Canning the Victory Crop."

LOUISIANA—To help parish nutrition committees with planning next year's program of work early, the Louisiana State Nutrition Committee arranged for a series of 14 one-day working meetings during May and June. The meeting places were carefully selected and the parishes grouped for attendance with a view to convenience of travel and small working groups. Every one of the 64 parish committees was represented at one of the meetings, and a goodly number of the members of the State Committee attended one or more of the sessions.

Each of the 14 working sessions had three main parts: The entire group outlined parish problems, needs, and re-

sources, with reference to local nutrition committee work; the group then broke up according to special interests to develop suggestions for committee action; suggestions were presented to the entire group, and various parish committees then planned the next steps for the coming year's work.

PENNSYLVANIA—For announcements preceding the opening of the County Community Canning Center, the Lancaster Nutrition Committee used posters, radio, movie theaters, newspaper announcements, and direct contact by chain telephone calls. Members called five persons about the canning center and asked each of them to call five others, and so on.

CALIFORNIA—San Bernardino County started a nutrition class for Army and Navy wives last December. Although the class membership changes constantly, there is now a regular weekly attendance of from 12 to 15 wives who never before have cooked. They are given an opportunity to prepare a noon meal under the supervision of a trained home economist. Every detail from the marketing down to the eating of the last crumb is considered from the viewpoint of providing a nutritionally adequate meal.

The San Bernardino County Food and Nutrition Committee has also tried to reach young, expectant mothers to acquaint them with their nutritional needs. When some of the local pediatricians and obstetricians were contacted, they stated that it is quite a problem in their busy days of practice to give the necessary time in advising their patients about nutrition and cooking, and that they would welcome help. As a result, a letter was written to each member of the County Medical Association asking them to cooperate by suggesting to expectant mothers that they enroll in a free nutrition course being offered at San Bernardino Junior College. This plan is outlined in the State News Letter of War Activities in the hope that other County Medical Associations will work out a similar program.

To bring about a keener interest on the part of school nurses in a school nutrition program, the San Diego City Food and Nutrition Committee offered a 4-hour brush-up course in nutrition. The nurses who took advantage of the noonday lessons expressed appreciation for this help in recognizing nutritional

deficiencies among the children and in guiding children in their selection of food at the school cafeteria.

NEBRASKA—Following are excerpts from the State News Letter to County Nutrition Committees, June-July:

"Does every member of your committee have a chance to see both the Washington and Nebraska News Letters? A good way to share them is to review and discuss them at your regular meetings. Appoint members of the group to do this. An informed committee is much more likely to be an active committee.

"As good a noon meal as possible for every school child again gets a high priority rating among the goals set up by local nutrition committees this coming year. Look for some specific help from your State Committee soon."

PUERTO RICO—Taking turns in preparing the nutrition news letter and in the responsibility for radio broadcasts is the way the agencies represented on the Puerto Rico Nutrition Committee are cooperating. Also in the interest of furthering nutrition on the island, the agencies prepare nutrition education materials to exchange with each other, are available to help with programs arranged by local groups, and give nutrition talks in the schools.

Puerto Rico's news letter, written in Spanish, is an excellent mimeographed bulletin which was started last November and now goes to 74 district committees once every 2 months. Line drawings are used to catch attention as well as to put over subject matter graphically. The letter features the food value of the native foods, encourages the raising and use of green soybeans, rabbits, and a number of kinds of local fruits and vegetables. It describes the activities of various district committees and helps to keep committees informed of the findings of current nutrition research.

WYOMING'S State Nutrition Newsletter for August, called "Campaign Edition," features points to stress in September, and attaches an unusual assortment of mimeographed materials prepared especially for the use of local committees. The first of these consists of two pages of "Suggestive Activities for Nutrition Month" in which are described "Food-for-Victory Parades," "Parents' Day at the Lunch Room," a series of suggestions for special programs that might be sponsored in schools or in

meetings, and nine other ideas. Some of these suggested activities are developed more fully in separate attachments as, for instance, "An Assembly Program for High and Grade Schools," a skit entitled "But I Don't Want Breakfast," a program for women's club meetings called "Around the Clock with Food," a "Nutrition-Information-Please" program, and an outline for a luncheon meeting program for men's groups—all written by the Executive Secretary.

ILLINOIS—Confronted with the constant criticism that nutrition education programs reach people too late in life, the Illinois Nutrition Committee has adopted a program of work for 1944-45 that will focus on the expectant mother and the young child. County subcommittees are asked to emphasize nutrition education for expectant and nursing mothers and for the mothers of young children. County committees are also asked to promote interest in school lunches and nutrition education in elementary schools.

One of a number of summer activities reported by many counties was a plan for a nutritionist to speak at the annual county institute for teachers.

MASSACHUSETTS State Nutrition Committee will encourage local communities to feature the nutrition slant of Harvest Suppers in September and October.

PATTERN CHANGES FOR STATE MEETINGS

Agenda for State Nutrition Committee meetings that have come during the last few months indicate increasing emphasis on plans for programs of work, month by month or for the year-round. In a general session, with a group leader or in a panel discussion, needs and problems of the State are drawn out, achievements and accomplishments of committee work are reported and evaluated, and jobs to be tackled are listed. These jobs usually become the subjects for further discussion by "special interest" groups or working subcommittees who report back to the entire group. From these reports a program of work evolves.

Something of this plan was followed in 2-day sessions in spring and summer meetings held in Georgia, Illinois, Texas, and Virginia.

IDEAS FOR FINANCING COMMITTEE WORK

With expanding activities of nutri-

tion committees comes the growing problem of how to raise funds for incidental expenses. Here are some of the ways committees have solved this problem: Looking toward permanent organization, one county committee has been made a member of the community chest and receives a modest allowance. Other committees have charged a registration fee for institutes, meetings, and workshops. In some committees there has been a decision that the members should assess themselves when funds are needed, although there are no regular dues. The sale of publications prepared by a subcommittee has provided one committee with a regular source of revenue. In some instances, the State Defense Council through funds appropriated by the State has set aside funds for the work of the State Nutrition Committee.


NEW MATERIALS—(Samples Not Enclosed)

"Lunch At School"—A revision of a 1943 folder by the same title. Explains how school lunch programs needing financial aid can obtain it through the War Food Administration. NFC-9, available free from regional OD offices.

"Cut Food Waste"—a folder telling how much food we waste and giving many ways to save food in the home. NFC-12, available free from regional OD offices.

"MINIMUM-WAGE BUDGETS FOR WOMEN"—a guide to their preparation. The section on food includes food plans for a minimum-wage budget in wartime, suggested menus for low-cost and moderate-cost meals, and a brief statement on the effect of individual food selections on cost of meals. Misc. Pub. 549, available from Office of Information, USDA, Washington 25, D. C.

Sincerely yours,



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